2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

San Pablo Oxtozapec. Here we stopped to have lunch and then continued to San Salvador, then down to San Andrés Agueyuc, then to San Lorenzo, then to Xochimilco. By 5:30 P.M., we were generally at the place in Xochimilco when the canoes left. If there were no canoes we walked all night. We generally arrived in Mexico City the following morning and took our fruit to the market.

Some inter-village trade still occurs at the time of fiestas and village *ferias*. However, Tepoztecan trading contacts seem to have become limited for the most part to Cuernavaca. Yautepec, at one time the key market for much of Tepoztecan produce, has now faded in comparison with the role of Cuernavaca.

The circulation of goods and money in Tepoztlán is generally small, but it varies considerably with the seasonal cycles. It is lowest during the months of May, June, July, and August, which is a period of scarcity. The most rapid circulation of goods and the greatest volume of money transactions occur after the plum harvest in September and October, and again after the corn and bean harvest in December and January. Money from plums is generally used to buy new clothing for the family.

Perhaps the most important single occasion for spending during the year is at the Carnaval, which comes in February after the harvest. I have estimated that approximately 50,000 pesos are spent by the villagers for the Carnaval. It is an occasion for buying new clothes, but the largest expense is for the elaborate costumes of the Chinelo dancers. A costume in 1947 cost as much as 800 pesos, and there were 45 dancers from the three competing barrios. Of course most of the costumes are used from year to year, but there is always the expense of repairing and improving them. Some people rent the costumes. The food expense is also great; musicians from each of the competing barrios are fed by the leading families in the barrio. In addition, most families entertain on this day.

The tourist trade has brought some income to Tepoztlán, especially to storekeepers, vendors of soft drinks, and the owners of the two tourist houses, but most of the money spent by these Tepoztecans goes to Cuernavaca.

The other important occasions for spending in Tepoztlán are the barrio fiestas, the gifts for *compadres* at baptisms, the expenses of the groom in weddings, and the expenses for the wakes and funerals.

There are a few corn merchants in the village who speculate in corn by buying in small quantities throughout the year to sell at higher prices during June to September. Speculation in corn is apparently an old practice in the village, for as early as 1579 we find complaints of Tepoztecans against price fixing by local politicians. Some of the corn merchants will make loans on the future corn crop and will be paid back in corn at the time of harvest.

CREDIT, LOANS, AND INTEREST

There are no organized credit facilities in Tepoztlán. Although a few hundred Tepoztecans have had *ejido* parcels since 1930, no *ejido* credit has come to the village. It is said that an effort had been made at one time to obtain such credit but

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

452 Tepoztecans withdrew the petition because they feared that it would be necessary for the *ejido* authorities to investigate the belongings of each of the families for whom the credit was designed.

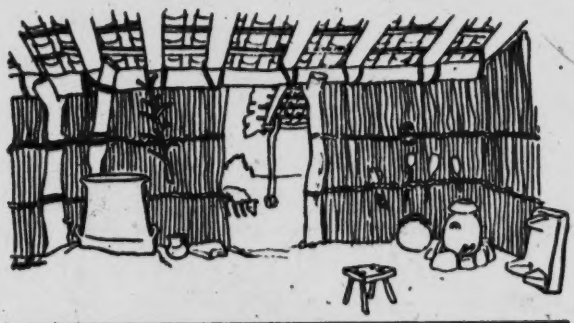
426 There are a few money lenders in the village who make loans at an interest rate of ten and twelve per cent a month. The money lenders are extremely cautious about making loans and are careful in choosing a good risk. The leading money lender in the village, a wealthy peasant, explained that he generally requires the borrower to come back about three times on the pretext that there is a shortage of funds. He assumes that any Tepoztecan who will put himself in the humiliating position of asking for a loan three times must have real need and appears to be a [675] good risk. Money loans are made by oral or written agreement, but in most cases some property is necessary as security. The practice of pawning property as security for a loan is common. Usually land, oxen, or *ciruela* trees are pawned, but smaller items such as an iron, or even a woman's *rebozo*, may be pawned for small loans from neighbors. During our stay in the village, neighbors often came with small items of property which they offered before asking for a loan.

426 When a man cannot repay a loan, although he may be bound by a written agree-
675 ment which is filed in the municipio, it is rare that the creditor takes legal action. In
691 fact, not a single case could be remembered. Instead, the borrower must relinquish his pawned property, or get another loan from a second party to repay the first one. All such transactions are viewed essentially as affairs between two individuals or families in which the coercive action of the law is rarely sought.

426 Borrowing money is generally limited to emergency situations when money is needed for food, doctors, medicines, or clothing. Borrowing may also occur to pay for a wedding feast or a funeral. But there is little borrowing for investment in capital goods or for starting a business. Loans are generally for small sums of 100 or 200 pesos. Larger loans are almost prohibitive because of the high rate of interest. While borrowing is not infrequent, it is viewed as an act of desperation rather than as a matter of everyday business. The idea of borrowing money from the bank in Cuernavaca is entirely foreign to the thinking of most Tepoztecans.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

in household comforts. On the other hand, many of the older generation, even those with means, scorn innovations and prefer to live the way they have always lived, investing what surplus they have in land and cattle. The use of modern household equipment correlates more with age and education than with wealth. On the whole, we find modern equipment more frequently in the homes of families with a medium income. In the homes of the better-to-do there is almost always a greater quantity of household goods, whether primitive or modern.



Kitchen in poor home.

Fig. 38.

Kitchen in well-to-do home.

Wealthier families generally own enough plates, pots, glasses, spoons, chairs, etc., to be able to serve fiesta meals to a large number of people without having to borrow, as do so many other Tepoztecan families.

The four features mentioned by Redfield as being inevitably present in the Tepoztecan kitchen of 1926-27 are still found, though with some modifications.[3] (Fig. 38 illustrates the contrast between kitchens in a well-to-do and a poor home.) These features are the hearth, the griddle, the grinding stone, and the pot. Today

[3] Redfield, *Tepoztlán*, p. 35.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

nails and now, not infrequently, on wood or wire clothes hangers purchased in Cuernavaca. Clothes closets are used only in a very few well-to-do homes in the center of the village. Food, except corn and beans, does not present a storage problem, since it is purchased in small quantities for immediate consumption. A few cans, bottles, jars, and baskets usually suffice to take care of current food. But the more modern or acculturated the family, the greater the number of storage facilities.

The family supply of corn presents the most important storage problem. For this purpose separate structures resembling corncribs are built in the family patio. Redfield describes these as follows:

> The storehouse (S. *troje*) is practically always present, and is usually placed immediately in front of the dwelling. It occurs in three forms, all of which are probably of entirely pre-Columbian design. The *ohuatlapil* (N. *ohuatlapilli*) is most common. This is circular, about six feet high and of varying diameter; it is made of vertical cornstalks bound together with rope. It contains maize on the cob (S. *mazorca*). Also made to contain *mazorca* is the *cincolote* (N. *zincolohtli*). This is square, of poles laid horizontally, one pair upon another at right angles to the first until the structure is raised tall enough to contain the maize to be stored. The *cuezcomate* (N. *cuezcomatl*) is a vasiform granary, plastered inside and out with clay. In it is kept shelled corn.[6]

The *cuescomatl* is now a rarity in Tepoztlán, since most of them have been dismantled or allowed to fall in ruin. They are considered very primitive in appearance, and the few families who still own them are not keeping them in good repair and obviously do not take pride in them, although some of them are over a hundred years old. Now shelled corn is stored inside the house in large sacks made of *petates* sewn together, in large baskets, or in burlap bags.

The sewing machine has, as Redfield put it, "become a part of the general Tepoztecan material culture; it is found in all parts of the village and in houses otherwise Indian in character." At present there are 215 sewing machines in Tepoztlán, owned by 25.3 per cent of the families. This is a relatively high proportion in comparison with other rural areas. The average distribution in rural areas throughout Mexico is 15.6 per 100 families; the average for both rural and urban areas in the nation is 22.5 per cent.

Although sewing machines are apt to be found in the poorest homes, as well as in well-to-do homes, there is a high correlation between degree of wealth and ownership of sewing machines. We find such ownership in 76 per cent of Group III, 39 per cent of Group I–C, and 10 per cent of Groups I–A and I–B. It is interesting to note that among Groups I–A and I–B there is a considerable number of families who own no property except a sewing machine. The few wealthy families who do not have their own machines either have little need for one or have all their clothing made by a local seamstress. The 215 machines in Tepoztlán service many more than that number of families, since it is customary to lend or rent machines to relatives and neighbors, and most machines are in continuous use. Indeed, it may be said that one of the secondary but not unimportant effects of the sewing machine

[6] Redfield, *Tepoztlán*, pp. 33-34.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

of whom were Tepoztecans. The cooperative was organized according to a plan suggested by the authorities in Cuernavaca. It had a directive body consisting of a president, secretary, and treasurer. The cooperative bought the charcoal from its members at the price of thirty-five pesos a *tonelado*. But it deducted eight per cent for handling expenses, including payment of the tax to the forestry department, a salary for the secretary, and for office equipment.

The cooperative became a powerful force in the village, and entered into politics. Its president, Juan Hidalgo, was elected president of the municipio in 1933 and 1934. In this capacity, Hidalgo was able to use the funds of the cooperative for public works and thereby gained much popularity. Under Hidalgo's leadership the cooperative sponsored the repair of the municipal building, the construction of the few public toilets in the courthouse, the construction of a school in the barrio of Los Reyes, and one in the outlying villages of San Juan, Santiago, and Ocotitlán.

Juan Hidalgo became wealthy and powerful. An informant, sympathetic to Hidalgo, explained how this happened.

> In spite of the fact that Hidalgo began very poor he earned much money. He controlled the funds of the cooperative and made many loans to his friends and *compadres* in the village. He had in his hands the credit of the village, for anyone who needed a loan had to come to him. This way he became very powerful. In his hands was the economic fate of many. He could make them or break them.

Hidalgo had many enemies, especially the leaders of the former cooperative of the village of San Juan. In 1935 he was shot and killed. Informants blamed the killing on residents of San Juan. In the village itself the cooperative was fought by the Fraternales. But the prospects of an immediate income could not be resisted by the Tepoztecans, and the cooperative won out in the early years. After Hidalgo's death, however, the cooperative began to decline. The succeeding president was accused of financial irregularities and fled the village for his life. An investigator from the Departamento Agrario confirmed the accusation and charged all the officials with negligence. The major burden of blame fell on the president; and since he had fled, nothing could be done.

After the death of Hidalgo, the candidate of the Fraternales was elected president, and many difficulties were placed in the path of the cooperative. The president denounced the cooperative to the federal forest authorities for excessive and illegal cutting of trees. The authorities investigated and fined the cooperative and finally in 1937, the cooperative went into bankruptcy and was dissolved.

The political history of the village since the middle thirties is given in the following account, written for me by an informant who has been close to the local government throughout this period. His account gives the reader something of the local flavor of politics, with its buying of votes "by dint of a few glasses of pulque," the drunkenness and petty thievery of officials, and the bitterness between local political factions. His use of the term "Bolsheviki" in referring to the Fraternales reflects the identification of the two in the minds of many Tepoztecans.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

185 birth, but rather greater application to the task of earning money after its arrival.
[126] The lack of foresight forces individuals into many distasteful borrowing situations and creates indebtedness among a people who abhor it.

177 There is comparatively little anxiety or sense of frustration in connection with
152 personal success or self-development. What anxiety there is, stems from fear of a
571 hostile environment and from the poor quality of inter-personal relations. Exceptions to this are found primarily among the more educated and acculturated group, particularly among the youth who have been to school outside of the village. It is among these individuals that we find greater dissatisfaction, ambition, desire for self-development, and fear of personal failure. These are also the people who show signs of maladjustment in the village.

156 Of special interest, for the understanding of the relative absence of frustration
183 or anxiety, is the tendency to shift personal responsibility to others or to impersonal forces and to explain non-conformity in terms of magical or other supernatural
[154] forces, which are believed to control the individual. The illness or death of a child may thus be attributed by the mother to the "evil eye" or to *espanto*, rather than
[753] to her own negligence. Illness of a child after weaning will be attributed to jealousy rather than to the brusque change in diet or poor maternal care. A young girl who breaks all the rules and goes after a boy may be said to have been bewitched. A man who is dominated by his wife is said to have been drugged.

154 This shifting of responsibility is also expressed in other situations. In the short
593 formal speech made by the parents to their future son-in-law, they remind him that the decision to marry their daughter is his own, and that he must not blame them if she turns out bad. Parents sometimes express a certain amount of relief when a son or daughter leaves home to work or to marry, for they no longer feel responsibility for his or her behavior. It is also not uncommon for parents to comfort themselves with the same thought at the death of a child.

777 Other traits, such as fatalism, stoicism in the face of misfortune, passivity, accept-
154 ance of things as they are, and a general readiness to expect the worst, tend to lift from the individual the burden of personal responsibility for his fate, and perhaps help to explain the relative absence of guilt or self-blame. Even in the face of gross injustice, in which the individual is protected by law, there may be
[691] little or no self-defense.

For example, a man who has been cheated out of a piece of property by a wealthier or more educated person may put up little fight on the ground that he will surely lose against the greater power of the other. A widow whose daughter was raped by a wealthy man did not press charges because, she said, "There is no justice for the poor and defenseless."

777 This attitude is even more striking in regard to injustices against society as a
626 whole or against village interests. Stealing public funds, misleading or mishandling
[661] citizens by officials, or immoral behavior on the part of a person in power usually
[208] go unpunished and often uncriticized in public, although there may be much private resentment. The absence of strong public opinion, which generally controls

3:Lewis E-5 (1943-1957) 1960
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

the forest resources sharply reduced charcoal production in the village and many families have thereby lost a traditional source of income. Some found work as agricultural laborers on the two or three gladiola farms that have been established in Tepoztlán; others have been employed by the nearby Y.M.C.A. Many more found work in Cuernavaca or as day laborers on road construction.

The changes in the occupational structure of the village have accentuated earlier trends. The number of nonagricultural occupations increased from 26 in 1944 to 33 in 1956 and the number of people engaged in these occupations rose from 273 to 565. This increase has been accompanied by greater specialization and a decline in the role of agriculture in the total economy. In 1944, approximately 20 percent of those engaged in nonagricultural occupations also farmed; in 1956, the comparable figure was only 25 percent! Today there is a much greater participation of women in the nonagricultural occupations than formerly. Women still predominate as teachers, *curanderos,* and corn merchants, but they now are also full-time tortilla makers, dressmakers, and hairdressers. Other new occupations in the village are those of tailor, *ciruela* merchant, and milk merchant. The increase in the number of teachers has been striking—from 21 in 1944 to 101 in 1956, an indication of the growth of a middle class in the village. Whereas formerly there was a shortage of teachers in the village, there is now a shortage of teaching jobs, and 70 Tepoztecans teach in rural schools outside of the village. Other occupations that have shown a large increase in numbers are: bus line employees, from 22 to 35; barbers, from 15 to 22; butchers, from 15 to 32; and storekeepers, from 20 to 64.

The distribution of people engaged in nonagricultural occupations by barrio shows an intensification of the older pattern of concentration in the larger central barrios: La Santísima, 27 percent; Santo Domingo, 25 percent; San Miguel, 23 percent; Santa Cruz, 11 percent; San Sebastian, 8 percent; Los Reyes, 5 percent; and San Pedro, 1 percent. Similarly, 85 percent of those engaged in the new occupations come from the three central barrios. The trend toward barrio differentiation of occupations, however, has been offset by a spread of services from the central plaza to the barrios. Each barrio now has its own corn mill and at least one store. Another interesting and symptomatic change has been the rise in the number of money lenders—from about 6 in 1944 to 18 in 1956. This reflects a much greater need for cash as well as an influx of wealth.

The only occupations that have shown a decline in the number of members since 1944 are those of carpenter, *curandero, chirimitero* (flute player), maguey fiber collector, and charcoal maker. The *huehuechiques* (ceremonial barrio officers) have completely disappeared, as I predicted in my earlier study. The *chirimiteros* are being replaced by modern secular musicians. As noted earlier, the decline in charcoal making was forced on the village by the federal authorities.

The most dramatic occupational change and one which has become a major new source of income to the village is the *bracero* movement. In 1948,

3:Lewis E-5 (1943-1957) 1960
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

fewer than thirty Tepoztecans were *braceros*—that is, temporary agricultural workers in the United States; by 1957, over six hundred men had been *braceros* for periods that varied from forty-five days to over a year. This occupational change has made for other great changes in the village. In 1943, Tepoztlán suffered from an acute land shortage. Now, because in many cases the *braceros* return to the village only to rest a few months before setting out for another period in the United States, it suffers from a shortage of manpower, and many *milpas* go unculivated. The *braceros* earn more in some months in the United States than they could earn in almost two years in the village, and many of them have invested their savings in improvements for their houses and in [illegible] clothing, and cloth—the village now has four full-time tailors who are kept busy providing tailor-made pants for the villagers. Although the *bracero* movement has broadened the perspective of some Tepoztecans, who now greet American visitors with a few words of English, most of the *braceros* are isolated in work camps or on farms, speak no English, live on a Mexican diet, and on the whole learn little about the United States and its way of life. Very few learn agricultural skills that can be applied in the village.

Most of the *braceros* from Tepoztlán are young men between the ages of twenty and thirty. They come predominantly from the upper segments of the lower economic group (Group I) but also from the middle group II (see p. 37). Few come from the poorest families and fewer from the wealthier families of Group III. This is an interesting change from the pattern in the early forties when only individuals with political connections and with experience outside of the village became *braceros*. At that time most Tepoztecans feared to leave the village for a distant country or even to go to the government recruiting stations for *braceros* in Mexico City. With more education, the younger generation developed a greater readiness to explore the outside world and to dare the hazards of a long journey. The sudden spurt in *bracerismo* did not occur, however, until a school teacher in one of the outlying villages became a *bracero* recruiter (locally called *coyote*). He had been a *bracero* himself and knew how to make the necessary legal arrangements. Tepoztecan men paid him a fee in the hope that he would get them longer contracts and also jobs in California rather than in Texas or Arkansas. The fees, which the *coyote* purportedly shared with government authorities, ranged from 200 to 400 pesos depending on the length of time of work specified in the contract. Most of the villagers who signed up had to borrow from local money lenders at the usual high rate of interest but they had avoided having to deal directly with the authorities and so had found the courage to take the initial step.

The *bracero* movement has served as a partial though temporary solution of the agrarian problem in the village. Tepoztlán has become dependent on the United States economy. Were the United States suddenly to close its borders to Mexican *braceros*, there would probably be a crisis both in the village and in the nation.

Another important change in Tepoztecans is their greater readiness to sell their land. In 1943, it was difficult to find anyone in the village who would consider selling a housesite or an agricultural plot. For example, in 1942 a